



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
NAVAL SCHOOL OF HEALTH SCIENCES
BETHESDA MARYLAND 20889-5611

IN REPLY REFER TO:
NSHSBETHINST 5370.2A
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MAY 7 1999

NSHS BETHESDA INSTRUCTION 5370.2A

From: Commanding Officer

Subj: FRATERNIZATION

Ref: (a) U.S. Navy Regulations, 1990
(b) OPNAVINST 5370.2A

1. **Purpose.** To clarify the policy of this command regarding fraternization as set forth in references (a) and (b).
2. **Cancellation.** NSHSBETHINST 5370.2.
3. **Applicability.** The requirements contained in this instruction apply to all military personnel assigned to the Naval School of Health Sciences, Bethesda, MD.
4. **Background.** Fraternization contradicts good order and discipline and leads to an erosion of individual and organizational effectiveness.

a. From an individual perspective, promising careers can be irreparably harmed by inappropriate or unduly familiar behavior. The loss of credibility among peers and subordinate which often results from behavior contrary to established Navy policy may render an individual an ineffective leader.

b. From an organizational perspective, fraternization threatens the integrity of the command structure, undermines its ability to accomplish the mission, contributes to decreased morale, and may detract from the otherwise noteworthy accomplishments of personnel.

c. Fraternization within the Navy Medical Department can project a negative professional image.

d. While concerned about actual instances of fraternization, we must also be aware of relationships which may be perceived as being inappropriate. We must be cautious and scrupulously avoid behavior which could discredit the integrity of the Navy, this command, or its members.

5. **Definitions**

a. Fraternization is:

(1) Any personal relationship between officers and enlisted members that are unduly familiar and that do not respect differences in grade or rank. Such relationships are prejudicial to good order and discipline or of a nature to bring discredit on the naval service.

(2) Any personal relationship between Chief Petty Officers (E-7 to E-9) and junior personnel (E-1 to E-6) that are unduly familiar and that do not respect differences in grade or rank are prejudicial to good order and discipline when they are within the same command.

(3) Any personal relationship between a staff member and student personnel within Navy training commands that do not respect differences in grade, rank, or staff/student relationship are prejudicial to good order and discipline.

b. "Senior subordinate" refers to the military relationship between members, including members of different services, in which one is senior to the other by virtue of grade, rank, or authority.

c. "Staff Member" refers to military personnel assigned to the command who are not in a student status.

d. "Student" refers to military personnel assigned to the command for training.

6. **Policy**

a. Fraternization, as defined in paragraph 5, shall be punishable as an offense under the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) when it is prejudicial to good order and discipline or brings discredit to the naval service. It is impossible to set forth every act that may be prejudicial to good order and discipline or is service discrediting because the surrounding circumstances often have more to do with making the act criminal than the act itself. However, dating, cohabitation, or sexual intimacy between officers and enlisted members or staff members and students is clearly inappropriate, as is a private business partnership. Likewise, such conduct between officers and between enlisted members where a senior-

subordinate supervisory relationship exists is equally inappropriate.

b. Conduct which constitutes fraternization is not excused by a subsequent marriage between the offending parties.

c. Service members who are married or otherwise related to other service members must maintain the requisite respect and decorum attending the official relationship while either is on duty or in uniform in public.

7. **Action**

a. Seniors throughout the chain of command and staff members shall:

(1) Be especially attentive to their personal associations so that their actions and the actions of their subordinates are supportive of the military chain of command and good order and discipline.

(2) Ensure that all members under their authority are aware of the policy set forth in this instruction.

(3) Eliminate offending conduct by taking appropriate administrative action, to include counseling and reassignment and, if necessary, by referring members for appropriate disciplinary action.

b. Department Heads shall ensure all personnel assigned to their department, as staff or students, are made aware of this instruction and its contents upon reporting to the department.

c. All incidents of fraternization will be referred to the Command Managed Equal Opportunity Officer (CMEO). The CMEO will conduct preliminary inquiries on all reported incidents. Results of investigations will be reported to the Commanding Officer. Violations of this instruction will be dealt with quickly and appropriately.

d. All members assigned to this command shall report any violations of this instruction via their chain of command.

8. **Summary**. The responsibility for preventing inappropriate relationships must rest primarily with the senior or staff member. While the senior or staff member is expected to control

and preclude the development of inappropriate relationships, this policy is applicable to both members in the relationship and both members are accountable for their own conduct.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D A Wynkoop". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

D. A. WYNKOOP

Distribution:

List I